



June 2011

# The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter  
Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

[www.ebcnps.org](http://www.ebcnps.org)

[www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps](http://www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps)

## POINT ISABEL RESTORATION

Pt. Isabel received a make-over at our May 7 work party thanks to the 30 volunteers who came out to help. The volunteers are shown below in a photo by Jane Kelly. What an amazing job everyone did! We welcomed a De La Salle student and his mother from Lafayette, two girl scouts and their mothers from Lafayette, a huge contingent of energetic volunteers from the engineering firm Black & Veatch, Chinese Scholars Zhihai and Dasheng (who took the opportunity to work at Pt. Isabel one last time before returning to the Shanghai CDC at the end of the month), three new volunteers including a CNPSer, and many of our dedicated regular volunteers.

Chase from De La Salle arrived early and moved the stacks of weeds from previous work parties into the dumpster before distributing the remaining pile of mulch. He also showed his artistic side by arranging among the planted natives a curved tree trunk found at the bottom of the mulch pile. The Girl Scout crew set to work digging up radishes, oxalis, and

invasive grasses from below the newly planted area. In the process, they unearthed a couple of small bleached bones which a CNPSer, Ron, is going to have ID'd for us. The Scouts also found some broken ceramics similar to earlier finds that we will forward to the East Bay Regional Park District naturalist.

The Black & Veatch crew removed masses of invasive grasses and radish, extending the area available for re-vegetation significantly. We look forward to planting this area with native grasses and California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) in the fall prior to the rains.

**Point Isabel restoration is on the first Saturday of each month at Pt. Isabel on the Bay Trail. The next one will be on June 4. Our hours are 10 am to 2 pm.**



## EARLY CNPS SUPPORTER AND BOARD MEMBER

Alma Oberst Holmgren, a veteran San Francisco newswoman and journalism educator, early CNPS supporter and corresponding secretary, died March 15, 2011 at her Berkeley home within days of attending performances of the San Francisco Symphony and the Metropolitan Opera. She was 95.



Arriving in San Francisco in 1955 at the invitation of the editor of Scripps-Howard's *San Francisco News*, a sister paper of the *Evansville Indiana Press* where she began her career, she became book editor, working on the paper through its merger with *San Francisco Call Bulletin* in 1959. She fell in love with San Francisco and with California's natural beauty and made her home here until her death.

After another newspaper consolidation, Miss Oberst returned to college to complete her journalism degrees, a bachelor's degree from San Francisco State and a master's from UC Berkeley in 1964. Soon after, she became the first head of the department of journalism at Contra Costa College, a community college in San Pablo, beginning a two-decade career that produced dozens of award-winning weekly newspapers called *The Advocate*.

Her native curiosity and inquisitiveness, honed by her own career in journalism, spawned scores of reporters, journalists and editors whose professional rigor won them places on newspapers, journals and magazines throughout the country,

with interests in everything from national politics to sports to food to international shipping.

*Advocate* editors routinely spent long hours with their advisor producing the weekly paper, and before the days when students addressed their teachers by their first names, the intimacy between teacher and student produced a lasting nick-name for her – Miss O.

"Because Miss O was a seasoned journalist, she knew what the profession offered: It opened doors to inaccessible people and exciting places. Miss O wanted her students to experience those worlds outside Contra Costa County. Whether taking us to a museum, the opera, a press club dinner, a student journalism conference, a Japanese dinner, or to search for wild orchids on a mountain trail, she wasn't just a teacher. She was our Pied Piper," says John Stark, 1968 *Advocate* editor now editor of *Experience Life*, published by LifeTime Fitness Corporation and former senior editor of *People Magazine*.

At *Contra Costa College* she seized the opportunity to take the newspaper's enterprise from a sideline of the English department to a fully independent baccalaureate and professional preparatory enterprise, fighting for a share of the college's instructional and facilities budget, including a fully equipped newspaper laboratory, and later expanded to include radio and television production. The newspaper office had been housed in a Quonset hut, perched at the edge of campus, a remnant of World War II facilities housed at the college's first campus at the Richmond shipyards.

Alma Oberst Holmgren was named community college journalism teacher of the year in 1972 by the California Newspaper Publishers Association and was inducted into the Contra Costa College Hall of fame in 2006.

Born in Evansville, Indiana and raised in Owensboro, Kentucky, Alma Oberst Holmgren was the second of six children born to Albert Benedict and Marie Wittgen Oberst. Her father practiced law from an office with a spittoon. Once transplanted to San Francisco, her interests in performing arts, drawing and the natural world blossomed. She became an active member of the California Native Plant Society, joined and participated in the Sierra Club, learned to draw native plants and flowers, visited museums with a passion and attended symphony and opera performances regularly. She also edited the newsletter for the Volunteer Council of the San Francisco Symphony and followed her students' and extended family's developments in a newsletter she called *The Family Bugle* which she continued until early this year.

At the age of 74, she was married for the first time to Roderick Holmgren, retired head of the Monterey Peninsula College journalism department, whom she had known professionally for years. On their honeymoon, the pair walked across England, from St Bee's Head to Robin Hood's Bay. The couple

divided their time between Berkeley and Carmel, where Mr. Holmgren had a home.

She was an unflagging enthusiast of nature walks and museum visits: Her students were routinely 'invited' to Sunday outings to Pt. Reyes with long hikes over the Bear Valley Trail, accompanied by quizzes about names of wildflowers and picnics surrounded by Sunday newspapers. She was notorious for inviting her favorite students to dinner parties with notable Bay Area news reporters and editors, assuming they could hold their own with seasoned professionals.

Alma Oberst Holmgren was a fierce and unrelenting champion of proper English grammar and usage: Not one of her students could fail to know the difference between often-confused words, such as farther and further and insure/ensure/assure. She tirelessly pressed her students to work outside their experience and comfort zones, pushing them to tackle reporting assignments with professionals.

## NATIVE HERE

Volunteers are the greatest assets that the California Native Plant Society has. Spending time with one another working on the things we value is very rewarding. On April 30 and May 1, volunteers helped keep the nursery open extra hours for Bringing Back the Natives Nursery Extravaganza and Garden Tour. Thank you Jane Kelly, Shirley McPheeters, John Danielsen, Gregg Weber, Tina Wistrom, Dave Caniglia, Beth Keer, and Janice Bray for welcoming visitors, conversing about native plants and garden wildlife, selling lots of plants, and being truly good company.

Summer is not the best time to plant many of our local natives, but it's a great time to come in and see them in bloom and fruit, to check out the book of pictures and information, buy the CD to continue studying the plants at home, stock up on books, purchase those nice zinc garden labels to mark where those herbaceous perennials are before they go dormant, converse with our knowledgeable volunteers and do your planning for fall planting, maybe even buying a few plants to take care of in pots at home until planting time comes.

The nursery is green and lush following the very wet winter and spring. Sometimes volunteers will be a few feet away from one another without being able to see each other. The plants have become "water junkies" but are slowly adjusting to the twice a week watering schedule. Tuesday afternoons seem to supply plenty of volunteers to cover that, but Saturdays the nursery could use a few more waterers. If you can

She was an untiring champion of the possibility she believed inherent in every student. "Miss O saw our potential, even if we didn't. She never gave up on anyone. Some forty years later I was still calling her for advice and encouragement," Stark says.

The Holmgrens wrote and published *Outrageous Fortunes*, a history of the consolidation of the American press.

Alma Oberst Holmgren is survived by her husband, Rod Holmgren; son in law Jack Holmgren; sister in law Mrs Charles (Amy) Oberst, and nieces Christina Henrikson; Katherine Hutchison; Stephanie Henrikson and Karolyn, all of the East Bay; Carolyn Ragsdale of Davis and Mary Oberst Kulongoski of Portland, Oregon.

Catherine Moss, 510-845-5277/510-251-1948, catherinemoss@gmail.com

commit to every week, that is wonderful, but it's also helpful to have help on a one-time or drop-in basis. Regularly scheduled waterers will be taking vacations and will need back-up. Feel free to e-mail ahead [nativehere@ebcnps.org](mailto:nativehere@ebcnps.org) or just drop by when you can.

Weeding is another task that can always use more hands. As more and more seedlings and cuttings are potted up and harden off enough, moving plants to the sales floor is a constant task.

Seed collection continues throughout the summer, usually on Tuesday mornings, leaving the nursery gate at 9 am. and returning by 2 or 3 pm at the latest, depending on how far away the collection site is and how long we have to hike to get to the target species.

For updates on what's going on at Native Here, sign up at the nursery or send us an e-mail asking to be put on our News List. You can also follow us on Facebook — Native Here Nursery.

Native Here is at 101 Golf Course Drive, Berkeley CA 94708 in Tilden Park across from the Tilden Park Golf Course on the Berkeley side. The phone number is 510 549-0211, Fax 510 525-9076 (off site). E-mail [nativehere@ebcnps.org](mailto:nativehere@ebcnps.org).

Charli Danielsen and Margot Cunningham

## JULY/AUGUST BAYLEAF ELECTRONIC ONLY

In past years, we have had 11 *Bay Leaf* issues. July and August were a combined issue. This year, to save money, we have decided to have only 10 print editions, The July/August issue will be online only. We hope to include lots of pictures: if you have pictures of chapter activities or inter-

esting flowers, etc., please send a jpg version to the editor [pepe1066@comcast.net](mailto:pepe1066@comcast.net).

The Bay Leaf Editors

## PLANT FAIR PLANNING: SATURDAY JUNE 25, 1 PM

Plans are well underway for the 2011 Native Plant Fair to be held at Native Here Nursery October 1 and 2. Please mark your calendars in order to save that weekend for shopping and/or volunteering.

Not only will there be the usual wide selection of local native plants, but there will also be several outside vendors selling plant related photos and craft items, hand-forged tools, books and other gift items.

It is not too late to join the Plant Fair Planning Team which will meet at Native Here Nursery at 1 pm on June 25<sup>th</sup>. “Understudies” are needed for almost all of the aspects of putting on such an event. Just show up at the meeting and you will find out who you’d like to work with and what you’d like to do for the Fair.

*Charli Danielsen and Margot Cunningham*

## FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, June 11, 9:30 am, Mount Diablo State Park, Falls trail, Middle trail, Bruce Lee Spring trail, Wasserman trail**

This is a moderate round trip of 5 miles with 1200 feet elevation gain on the way out. It will be mostly downhill on the return trip, and we expect to be out 4-5 hours. Bring lunch and at least 1.5 liters of water. We will start on Clayton Oaks trail, and proceed from there to Bruce Lee Spring trail, lower Donner trail, and on to Wasserman and Falls trails.

Expect to see *Monardella douglasii* and *Collinsia tinctoria* in flower, along with several paintbrush species, *Clarkia biloba*, *Paroscedum pentandrum*, *Campanula exigua*, *Silene californica*, *Pickeringia montana*, *Asclepias californica*, and lots of common plants. We should arrive back at the parking lot around 3 pm. The trip leader is Gregg Weber, and you can call him at 510-223-3310 if you have questions.

**Directions:** Take 24 or 680 to Ignacio Valley Road, and continue on Ignacio Valley Road several miles into the city of Clayton. At the intersection of Ignacio Valley and Clayton Road, turn right at the stop light onto Clayton Road. Stay on Clayton Road past the first intersection with Marsh Creek Road; in about a mile, Clayton Road becomes Marsh Creek Road. Continue straight on Marsh Creek Road to Regency Drive, where you turn right. Go 3 blocks on Regency Drive, and then turn left on Rialto Drive. Go to the end of Rialto Drive and park. Do not go to the end of Regency, because that is a different access point.

**Sunday, June 19, 9:30 am, Mount Diablo State Park, Knobcone Point Road and Blackhawk Ridge Road**

We will go through woodland, grasslands, chaparral areas, with *Pickeringia*, *Salvia*, *Arctostaphylos*, *Garrya*, *Calochortus splendens*, and lots of oaks and *Clarkia rubicunda*. This can be a very hot walk, so dress for heat and bring at least 1.5 liters of water, and lunch.

The road loses about 500 feet down to a creek, and then gains 700 feet to the top of the loop, with elevations reversed on the way back. We should arrive back at the parking lot at 4

pm. The trip leader is Gregg Weber, and you can call him at 510-223-3310 with questions.

**Directions:** Take 680 to the Diablo Road exit, and go east on Diablo Road. At Green Valley Road, only one lane goes straight ahead. After Green Valley Road, go past and do not turn at the Diablo Country Club sign. In about a mile, turn left at the Mt. Diablo State Park sign. Continue to the end of Mt. Diablo Scenic Boulevard, which becomes South Gate Road as it enters the park. Be prepared to pay the fee (now \$10?) at the main entrance station, or have you state parks pass ready. Continue for about a mile, and park at the large parking area at Curry Point, where we will meet.

**Sunday, July 10, 10:00 am, Redwood Regional Park, trip to focus on sedges and late-fruiting plants**

We will see about 5 species of sedge. Learn some basics of sedge ID and morphology (sculptural shapes of plant parts in botany). A copy of the *Field Guide to Intermountain Sedges* and also the key from the 2011 *Jepson Manual* will be available for reference. We will take Redwood Peak trail, French trail, Starflower trail, Tres Sendas trail, and Stream trail.

**Directions:** Get onto Skyline Drive in the Oakland hills, either from Highway 13 from the north or 580 from the south. From 13, the most direct route is the Joaquin Miller exit, and then take Joaquin Miller Road to Skyline. Turn left at the light for Joaquin Miller and Skyline, and follow Skyline north (mostly uphill) as you go to the Chabot Space Science Center roughly a mile north of Joaquin Miller Road. Turn into the driveway for the Space Center and park either in the lot or in the parking garage, which is free. Ignore the no trespassing signs as the do not apply to park or science center users. Gregg Weber is leading and you can call him at 510-223-3310 if you have questions.

*Janet Gawthrop*



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We celebrated our first official Native Plant Week, April 17th through April 23rd (including the Saturday before and the Sunday after). Here are a few pictures from those events.



Above, Heath Bartosh and friends, photo by Igor Skaredoff. Below, Creek/Botanical/Habitat Trail Team Members. Photo by Peg Henderson/NPS.



For more information on our joint effort with Friends of Alhambra Creek, EBCNPS, NPS, the City of Martinez and others to create a Creek/Botanical/Habitat Trail in Martinez that will extend from the Amtrak Station to the John Muir Historical Site, please contact Elaine Jackson [elainejx@att.net](mailto:elainejx@att.net). You can also view our actual planting at the corner of Escobar and Castro streets at <http://martinez.patch.com/articles/a-trail-of-native-plants?ncid=M255#video-5786845>

Please join us in welcoming our new members for the March/April time frame Edward Beggs, John Delphey, Rhiannon Kingonsmith, Kate Lipman, Karen Mahshi, Margot Sheffner, Tik Thurston, & Elizabeth Wahl. As always, a huge thank you to our renewing members



Above, John Muir Earth Day Birthday Cake by Jane Moore. by George Zamaria.

Below, Lisa Gorrell and Shirley Skaredoff getting ready to plant. Above photo by Elaine Jackson.



**Upcoming Events:** Opportunities to meet and greet the public for CNPS

June 11th, Heritage Day at Borges Ranch (Walnut Creek) ~ Lead volunteer Christine Pyers

### Reminders

- Still looking for join dates prior to 1986
- Outreach Coordinator position still vacant
- Restoration Chair, vacant
- Be sure and visit our updated membership page at <http://ebcnps.org/index.php/membership/>

Elaine Jackson  
[elainejx@att.net](mailto:elainejx@att.net), 925-372-0687

## ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

**"Art and Music in the Gardens"** brings together Oakland's vibrant art and gardening communities in a signature event hosted in the multi-acre Gardens at Lake Merritt and Lake-side Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Avenue, June 4-5, 10am-6pm.

More than 50 artists will be featured, showing and selling their art in the Garden Center and the Gardens. Event Honorary Chair and noted muralist Dan Fontes will lead a giant butterfly painting event in the Gardens.

Musical ensembles, playing acoustically under the redwood trees, will delight families with classical, jazz, folk, blues, and ancient Japanese flute. A Poetry Festival will include an afternoon series of Oakland poets reading under the old oak tree, an all day Zine exchange booth (bring one — take one home) and a morning ekphrasia (writing about the art) open to all wishing to participate.

Also taking place throughout the weekend in the Gardens' 11 horticultural collections (several are nationally renowned) will be gardening talks, exhibits and demonstrations: Alameda County Master Gardeners in the Edible Garden, pruning demonstrations in the Japanese Gardens, along with Bonsai trimming and landscape design tips for the East Bay. The Gardens at Lake Merritt were recently named a Top Five California Public Garden by AAA's "Via Magazine."

Delicious picnic fare will be available from Chef Robert Dors-ey III of Blue Oak at the Oakland Museum of California.

Two-day event is free of charge and being produced by the Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt (FGLM), Arts and Creative Expression (ACE) and the City of Oakland.

*Our chapter is a member of the Oakland East Bay Garden Cen-ter. We have been invited to have a table at this event, but need people to help with this. To help, please contact Delia Taylor 510-527-3912, deliataylor@mac.com.*

### **The Nuts and Bolts of Native Gardening**

June 21, 2011, 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm, Rockridge Public Library, 5366 College Avenue, Oakland

Join us to hear Troy McGregor of Garden Natives Nursery, describe how best to convert a tired and maintenance hungry yard into a native plant haven. Troy will not only cover the best plants for our area but also how to plan and implement the garden. Topics such as soil, irrigation and mulch will be covered, as well as the wildlife impact of gardening with natives.



Left: *Layia hieracioides* from April 29, 2011 at South Gate Road, Mt. Diablo State Park. Right: *Sanicula saxatilis* from Mount Diablo State Park (near the summit), taken on April 23, 2011. Photos by Kevin Hintsa.

## Chapter Directory

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jcggame@stanford.edu

### Unusual Plants

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### EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

#### Native Here Nursery

510-549-0211  
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nativehere@ebcnps.org

Sales—Margot Cunningham  
bunchgrassmarg@gmail.com

### Plant Fair

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510-549-0211  
nativehere@ebcnps.org

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925-937-6791  
ldhunt@astound.net

### Restoration Projects

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Point Isabel—Tom and Jane Kelly  
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510-684-6484 (c)  
kyotousa@sbcglobal.net  
Strawberry Creek—Tom and Jane Kelly

*Officers and Committee Chairs serve on the Board.*

## RESTORATION PROJECTS

### Saturday, June 4 and July 2, Redwood Regional Park at Skyline Gate, 9:00 am

Meet park staff and other volunteers at the Skyline Gate parking lot, from where we'll proceed to rip French broom, or cut and bag seed pods if the ground is too hard. You can bring your own gloves and tools, or the park staff can provide a loaner. See below for directions

### Saturday, June 11 and July 9, Huckleberry Regional Park 9:30 am

Meet at the parking lot, where we will sign in, pick up tools, and decide on the worksite for the month. Several invasive plants are still trying to make inroads, including *Vinca*, cape ivy, French broom, and *Myosotis*. Dress in long sleeves and pants for protection, and let us know if you need gloves before you start work. Gloves matter because they prevent much poison oak dermatitis.

**Directions** (to both regional parks): From Highway 13, exit at Park if you are coming from south of Oakland. Turn left at the exit ramp to go over 13, and turn left again at the traffic light on the other side of the freeway. You will now be on Mountain, which you follow north for a couple of blocks before turning right on Snake (with another traffic light). If you are coming from the north, exit at Moraga/Thornhill and drive south on Moraga to Snake.

To get to Redwood RP, go straight uphill as Snake turns off to the left. You will now be on Shepherd Canyon Road, and you should see Shepherd Canyon Park to the right. Follow this road to the end, and turn right at the junction of Shepherd Canyon and Skyline. Follow Skyline as it winds south, and turn left into the parking lot with the park sign.

To reach Huckleberry RP, follow the directions above until you start onto Snake. After only 2 short blocks on Snake, make a hard left turn to stay on Snake. Follow Snake to where it ends at Skyline, roughly 2 miles from the left turn away from Shepherd Canyon. Turn left onto Skyline and follow it a short distance to the Huckleberry sign and lot on the right.

### June Stewardship in Garber Park

Join the Garber Park Stewards for two June work parties: Tuesday, June 7 and Saturday, June 18 from 10 am-noon. The Garber Park Stewards are a local volunteer group dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the park's natural woodland and wetland resources with regard for the safety concerns of the park's many urban neighbors.

The planting season is over and the rains have abated, so we are focusing our efforts on preparing the park for the long dry season ahead. We will evict the weeds from our newly planted Restoration Site and continue our attack on Cape ivy in Horsetail Meadow. In addition, we will continue careful maintenance of the Loop Trail, which becomes overgrown with vegetation as summer progresses.

The trails in Garber can be steep and the vegetation dense, so wear long sleeves and pants and sturdy boots or shoes with treads.

**Directions:** The closest address is 136 Evergreen Lane. From Alvarado Road take Slater Lane, then right on Evergreen Lane. The entrance is at the end of the street. For more information or specific directions contact Shelagh, garberparkstewards@gmail.com or visit our blog, www.garberparkstewards.blogspot.com.

California Native Plant Society  
East Bay Chapter  
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Time Value  
June 2011 issue

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Native Here, page 3

Tuesdays: Seed collecting leaves Native Here at 9 am  
Native Here open noon-three pm  
Fridays: Native Here open nine-noon  
Saturdays: Native Here open ten am-two pm

Saturday, June 25, Plant Fair planning meeting 1 pm at Native Here

### Restoration, page 7

First Saturday of each month. 10 am to 2 pm, Pt. Isabel on the Bay Trail. The next one will be on June 4.

Saturday, June 4 and July 2, Redwood Regional Park at Skyline Gate, 9:00 am

Saturday, June 11 and July 9, Huckleberry Regional Park 9:30 am

Tuesday, June 7 and Saturday, June 18 from 10 am-noon, Garber Park Stewards

### Field trips, page 4

Saturday, June 11, 9:30 am, Mount Diablo State Park, Falls trail, Middle trail, Bruce Lee Spring trail, Wasserman trail  
Sunday, June 19, 9:30 am, Mount Diablo State Park, Knobcone Point Road and Blackhawk Ridge Road  
Sunday, July 10, 10:00 am, Redwood Regional Park, trip to focus on sedges and late-fruited plants

### Art, music and gardens, page 6

June 4-5, 10 am-6 pm "Art and Music in the Gardens", Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Avenue.

### The Nuts and Bolts of Native Gardening, page 6

June 21, 2011, 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm, Rockridge Public Library, 5366 College Avenue, Oakland

## Membership Application and Renewal Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to affiliate with:

☐ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Membership category:

☐ Individual, \$45

☐ Family, Library, Group or International, \$75

☐ Plant lover, \$100

☐ Patron, \$300

☐ Benefactor, \$600

☐ Mariposa Lily, \$1500

☐ Limited Income or student, \$25.00

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816